

SPRITUALISM

Truth is Naked; Only Fable Wears the Furbelows of Fancy

BY M. GRIER KIDDER.

The less a man knows the more he believes what nobody knows, and the less he investigates the more he takes for granted. Dualism is the currency of ignorance, and baseless assertion the legal tender of self-conceit, only the man who invites contradiction mistrusts appearances, modesty is the daughter of mistake, and nobody who has proved what he knows pretends to know much. For this reason intelligence would not until it is introduced to proof, wisdom wears uncertainty until disproved by evidence. There is no sentiment about fact, no romance in naked truth, only fable wears the borrowed furbelows of fancy. Many contend that truth cannot do duty for ignorance, that superstition is the only good and wet nurse for mental babes. So is whiskey useful in delirium tremens, the dog's hair good for bit bite, but they forget that if there had been neither whiskey nor dog, there would be neither delirium tremens nor bite. We shall never know all; what we can know is only a little of what our parents did not know and what our children will know more of than we. The stagnation of perfect knowledge would be worse than the stagnation of perfect ignorance. Infinite wisdom, like artificially digested food, while relieving at first, would eventually atrophy; there would be no work for the brain, hence the rudimentary brains peculiar to those who imagine they have nothing to learn.

To satisfied certainty, everything is proof; few of us have our reason well in hand, and mental co-ordination is a thing of the future. The world is a mess; where one concentrates, a thousand scatter. The consciousness of the imagination is so alluring that only a disciplined mind can safely give it rein. The ignorant man's imagination is ever on an irresponsible foray in mental space, eternally bush-whacking amid the twilight realm of the impossible; every hound breeds an architect of air castles; it is a prodigious navigator who documents his space time in Utopia; the poet only advertises the day dreams the rest of us enjoy but cannot express. Every truth is travestied by lies, every substance casts grotesque shadows, and why should not our known and brief life invite sentimental comparison with eternity?

I grant that without immortality your present life would prove a failure, but would your being immortal prove immortality a success? The more worthless a man is here, the more satisfied is he of his post mortem longevity and everlasting work. I know that I am here, that is a monotonous self-evident fact, and the man who thinks he knows more has an understanding with definite limits and a self-conceit with indefinite boundaries. You ask: "If I am to be annihilated, why was I born?" You are an insignificant effect fulfilling some great cause, and it is presumption for you to expect to be eternally no 'count. I blame nobody for expecting a hereafter or being resigned to extinction, but I have no patience with anybody who hires somebody else to prove either.

I deny no subsequent career to any man—none so present fuss over his future feathers, only claim that that particular possibility is settled on this side of the grave by no proof of probability. I know of no mortal analogue to fit immortal creation, analogy to me, seems to halt at the death bed.

I modestly confess to my descent from an anthropoid ape, but my family pride insists that he was in good health when he assumed that responsibility. And let me say, before I forget, that I prefer to be descended from monkeys and improve on my ancestry than to have been "created a little lower than the angels" and faked up at total depravity.

From that vast and innumerable army that has gone to recruit the "bivouac of the dead," not one has returned to testify in behalf of a future life; from all those great men and good women who have passed the last threshold of life, not one voice has sounded a note of hope, and he who would be satisfied of a life beyond the grave must invoke faith and

faith alone. Oath, while the most common of earthly occurrences, is the most mysterious; this is owing largely to the fact that the gentleman most interested in rarely endowed at the supreme moment with the requisite faculty for scientific research; as a result, our knowledge rests upon the experience of those whose reticence is too pronounced for practical use. Yet, spiritualists insist that proof is born on every death bed, and that death is but the mid-winter who ushers us into another life. I am not given to questioning anyone's personal sanity for one lapse into lunacy, but I cannot hear a spiritualist try to prove that people's consciousness is not impaired by their funerals without hoping that it is only symptom. No fool willing to pay for the unknowable, has to hunt long for the rascal who knows it, and he who determines to only the impossible is going to get something so much like it that he can't tell the difference.

Not only do "dualists" see and converse with "F's," they fall in love with them and marry them. I know a woman who married a spirit man, and the match has turned out a very happy one. The advantage of such a marriage is, there is no danger of the husband getting too superfluous; as children perhaps would invite comment, they have decided to remain childless. What puzzles me, though, is, did that marriage make her a widow? If not, could she marry a live man without committing bigamy? In ordinary cases, a dead husband is one of the essentials of widowhood, and I can't see that postponing the wedding till after the funeral alters the case.

When a man dies, he leaves a family, the children being foreign born, of course. Both wife and children are, perhaps, rather diaphanous for practical purposes, and in the opinion of some, altogether too thin, but I suppose it is the best he could do under the circumstances. I believe in marriage, but I also believe in grappling with facts; I might stand a spirit mother-in-law, but that is about as far as I should care to venture.

Some time ago I met a woman who went into a trance, and swap souls with Thomas Paine; we addressed her as "Mr. Paine," and secured much authentic data from him respecting himself and current events in the Spirit Land. Mr. Paine said he is happy and has proved his book to be true, and his chief recreation is witnessing the disappointment of the orthodox arrivals; he said the Presbyterian immigrants especially grieved. At first we thought that he had journeyed to another room to "talk with our loved ones," and pretty soon a medium came up to me and said, "You had a father?" I didn't know where she got her information, but she seemed to have my family history, to that extent, down. I assured her that from the various and emphatic evidences the old gentleman used to furnish, I thought I had. "Well," she said, "He said, 'I am not discouraged; I will succeed in what you are doing.' I wasn't aware that I needed the rest cure at that particular juncture, but as it was the first time he old gentleman ever accused me of doing something I ought to do, I felt further indebted to the beaming environments of the Spirit Land. But I can't get over those violets."

The medium also told us that the spirits ate, drank and worked. The spirit food I ought to do, I felt further indebted to the beaming environments of the Spirit Land. But I can't get over those violets.

To do spiritualists justice, they are the only rearers after immortality who don't come to years when they are "up against it." It is an uncommon spiritualist who doesn't consider his last breath a sigh of relief. Death to the majority, even with the assurance of a future life, is abhorrent; without the hope of immortality, with the prospect of being nothing and going nowhere, it is to most

people unspeakable appalling. Personally, the chance of being nothing and going nowhere consoles me with the hope of not being more than I want to be, and going where I don't want to go.

I have seen several die, and to me the drawn features and mumble coldness portray extinction, while that dreadful rattle in the throat seems to speak an everlasting farewell. But the great question is yet to be answered, an eternal problem impregnable to reason, unconquerable by science. Alas! the mystery of immortality is the immortality of mystery!

Spiritualism is not new; it has comforted fools and enriched rascals since the dawn of folly, and the sun rise of rascality. It takes little to convince most people that what they want to believe is believable.

While the scientist courts the sun, light and invites contradiction, the spiritualist sits in a dimly-lighted room with others of the feeble-minded, while a fat woman in a Mother Hubbard and under the "control" of Beethoven or Mozart, plays "Nearer My God to Thee," on a wheezy melodeon. All of this is essential to the existing mental stagnation during which the spirits appear. Speaking of "control," a medium showed me a portrait of Napoleon III. He pointed while under the "control" of Sir Joshua Reynolds; it was like a board fence advertisement of "Sunny Jim," executed with a white-wash brush. She said she was unconscious when she did it, and I said I thought she was. Hope Napoleon III is still in it. If I were one of those distinguished "controllers" in the Spirit Land, I wouldn't do a thing to some of these mediums when they "pass over."

It is often an excellent plan, when you have anything "unusually good" to say, not to say it, and when you have been inspired to spring an "unanswerable argument" on the public to go slow and let the other fellow spring it. Don't know till everybody else has tried it. I've been there! I have been inspired to spring an "unanswerable argument" on the public to go slow and let the other fellow spring it. Don't know till everybody else has tried it. I've been there!

Spiritualism is positive assertion established by negative proof; immortality is true because nobody knows it isn't. A submitted jackass braying into the vacuum of an intellectual desert and waiting for a rational echo; its followers parallel their claims with earthly sophistry till the parallel collapses, then crawl behind the bulwarks of dogmatism.

Once an Irishman went to the morgue hunting for a missing friend. "Can you identify him?" asked the officer. "I can that," answered Pat. "Wasn't he deaf and dumb?"

I am certain of much of what I am unconscious, nor do I wish to live till I am conscious, only of what I am certain. But there is considerable difference between believing in spite of my inability to understand, and because of my inability to understand. My body may be the residence of an invisible essence that nothing but death can evict; perhaps that essence is invested with the attributes of conspicuous longevity. But if it be, why has science failed to substantiate what an old woman can prove at half a dollar a head? Why should the solution of this tremendous problem be relegated to the decision of a horde of crazy rhapsodists who think what they imagine, believe what they think and are certain of what they believe. And to them, doubting their ability to be the unseeable, hear the unhearable and know the unknowable is equivalent to an accusation of telling the untruthful. By no means! I am sorry that they are so truthful; if they were hypocrites, there would be some hope for them; we can occasionally reform a liar, but a fool—God help a fool!

"But," you say, "this nonsense costs millions." Granted! "Then why spiritualism?" I substitute "unconquerable sense." False comfort is an unnatural stimulant, an unhealthy intoxication that reacts in proportion; there is nothing lasting but truth, with its rewards and punishments, its crosses and crowns.

Another thing, why worry about the dead? Why not confine ourselves to the living, making a specialty of what we can know, and knowing more of it instead of trying to scrape an acquaintance with what nobody can know by paying somebody to introduce us?

How foolish to think that our greatness and best men, who have gone, are so undignified as to favor ignorance

with what they have denied to wisdom refuse to our greatest scientists what they are said to expend upon the most emotional, credulous, superstitious aggregation of bifurcated donkeys included within the Scheme of Salvation? I have given the subject my prayerful attention, and I have arrived at the settled conviction that this world will not be what it should be until it is favored with a new Abolition devoted exclusively to the intellectual redemption of the spiritualist, society and the socialist party.

Spiritualism not only claims to know what nobody knows, but proves the unknown with known nonsense, establishes identity with temporal "ton-toler." Every seance is a commentary on fanatical faith; every "sitting" an oblique lesson in infinite infatuation. People who resent the honestly earned title of "humatics," congratulate in dig, "happy" around a fat, frowzy old friend, who assumes the role of a middle-man between them and some problematical spook? Shocking! Let the children go to drink in this skim milk dairy from the withered breast of the hag Superstition, and "talk with grandpa or grandma," whose ashes may have mingled with the consecrated compost of some second-hand grave yard forty years before they were buried in the "control" of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Did you ever stop to think how much we should know if we didn't think we knew it? Ever occur to you how much something we could find somewhere if we didn't think we could find it nowhere for nothing? Nobody knows much of anything else; concentrating on many is making a specialty of all.

I am as satisfied that spontaneous generation is responsible for our being emotion and mental as I am that adaptation is responsible for our development physical and mental. I have no doubt that what we call the "soul" had its inception in the menad and has come down through the various phases of brute life, improving as it came, until it reached man. And what grounds have we for believing that evolution is going to pause permanently at him? May not our posterity in a thousand years hence try valiantly to dodge the disgrace of descent from us as the majority of us try to evade the odium of being descended from baboons?

Knowledge is not mothered by emotion and heredity by wish; it is the daughter of directed mental labor, the inevitable offspring of difficult intellectual delivery. And when a hysterical old woman pretends to conceive and bring forth what the greatest man can begot, I for one, am going to suspect the child.

Human nature instinctively glorifies or shies at what it doesn't understand. Some of us are satisfied with what we know of this world; others want to be authorities on the next. Some claim that there is no resurrection independent of fertilizer and seed; others insist on watching a cemetery for a problematical crop. Some say that the dead are dead; it is on letting go one life to get a better hold on another. In the meantime, while making the most of life, let the rest of us await the inevitable proof, "possess our souls in patience," and keep cool, at least for the present.

The only "Infinite and Eternal Eternity" which exists is—matter. Only this and nothing more. In segregation it is represented in the dew-drop, rose, bone, cadaver, protoplasm, dust, rock or world. In infinite aggregation it comprises the universe of cosmic and organic life. Could this latest spook of Atheistic scientists, supposed to exist beyond the reach of science, be produced and inspected by telescope and microscope it would, of necessity, also be found to consist of matter, and matter only, simply an eternal repetition of what we know exists in our immediate environments.—Wettstein.

The Scapegoat.

Teacher—"I shall not keep you after school, Johnnie. You may go home now."

Johnnie—"I don't want to go home. There's a baby just come to our house."

Teacher—"You ought to be glad, Johnnie. A dead little baby."

Johnnie (vehemently)—"I ain't glad. Pa'll blame me—he blames me for everything."—Lippincott's Magazine.

She Meant "Virago."

"I never dare to look down upon him standing on a high place," said Mrs. Lapsling. "It always gives me an attack of vertigo."—Chicago Tribune.

FATALISM

Or Federation, One or the Other, Must Be Accepted

(By Channing Severance.)

Any person who presents a thought or an idea for public consideration must expect criticism, and it should always be welcome, for it stimulates thought and sometimes leads to a new view point. And now Brother Wade let us look at your criticism.

"Fatalism gives a plausible excuse to every criminal that ever disgraced humanity."

It was Ingalls who said, "(the impossible never occurs)." It is simply impossible for all men to see or think alike, consequently they do not. This much Mr. Wade must admit. As all men do not see and think alike, there must be a reason why they don't, and we find it in fatalism or inevitable necessity. Whatever insures thought controls action, and no man ever had a thought that did not result from the effect of environment on body and brain.

If a man's environment makes him cold and hungry, and it is not in his power to relieve his suffering without committing the crime of theft, he is very likely to "disgrace humanity" by so doing; and where you find men committing crimes, you will find an impelling cause beyond their power to escape; hence, men act as they do because they must.

Fatalism does not give a "plausible excuse" for men's acts, but the cause. Mr. Wade never heard of a man's stealing an overcoat on the equator, for they are not needed there; and again there are none there to steal, two good reasons why he does not. Governments result from necessity.

Everything that occurs under governments is the result of causes that can always be found; and if every judge, jurymen, and lawmaker were fatalists, they would not all see or think alike; hence, would not act alike.

As a fatalist, I believe a man with numerous inclinations should be deprived of his liberty, though I do not believe such people are responsible for their mental condition which make them dangerous. When you see such a person look for the cause, and you will be found sufficient to account for his acts or inclinations. If a man is crazy and running amuck, a fatalist would say as quick as any one: "shut him up." Why? Because of personal safety, as the law of self preservation is recognized by all men. Mr. Wade says: "I object to some of his ground work of facts because they are merely assumptions." When he speaks of facts, he fails to know what he is de-chy-lit-ed to show him his mistake in so claiming.

That Nature works without plan or purpose, I reaffirm, and the reasons for so thinking are so many and so varied life is not so poor enough to deal with them all. Ah Mr. Wade thinks Nature does have plans and purposes, will he please tell the Blade readers why, and what for, she once put a tape worm in the stomach of Moses Hull that was forty-six feet long and caused him much poor health before he found out what she had done and removed it. If he can see anything that Nature ever built up on this earth that she did not afterwards tear down, he should not conceive the imagination, as no one else has such knowledge. No one who thinks and reasons can suppose that the universe always existed as it is today, or that it always will; for eternal changes are going on in everything that exists.

It is necessary to be a poet to see the beauties of Nature, but one cannot live on scenery any more than we can here on our boasted climate; so logs and hominy play a more important part in life after all, than things which merely please the eye. Johnnie (vehemently)—"I ain't glad. Pa'll blame me—he blames me for everything."—Lippincott's Magazine.

Mr. Wade asks, "why do you love, Brother, and respect your mother?" Being a Yale man I will answer his simple question by asking another. Why does a young man in this vicinity have no love, honor or respect for his mother, and why did he put formaldehyde in her coffee-

pot recently and try to kill her? If it is Nature's "plan and purpose" that he and I should love and respect our mothers, and the young man just mentioned should not love his, what causes the difference in her "plans and purposes?" Fatalism has no trouble in settling both these questions, but the man who gives Nature conscious intelligence in her actions cannot do so. I must reaffirm that will power is nothing but the strength of man's desires, for where desire to get, or to do something, is absent, the will never manifests.

Mr. Wade asserts that he can, will and does contrary to his desires and judgment if he so chooses. But he errs; for the moment he acts, he acts to gratify a desire that resulted from a certain line of thought which produced it. No act of any kind takes place without desire where the will moves, for the will is not an independent force that sits above and has no connection with causes. So when causes invariably move the will—and I defy any one to show an exception—it is an utter absurdity to talk about free will. We have no more to do with the will in its last analysis than we have with the action of heart or lungs, digestion or the tendency to sleep. If the will were an independent force it would have to be divorced entirely from natural influences, and we know it is not if we know anything. As our future actions would be decided by the influence of the environments we happen to be in, we cannot foretell what we will do in one or ten years hence.

On one day even, for we do not know what conditions will prevail to compel action; and this is why no man can foresee his fate any faster than it comes. To illustrate this point. Yesterday I desired a man to start for a certain place which he expected to reach in this city. He was about to cross a street when struck by a team and in less than one hour was dead.

That was his fate, and it was through no plan or purpose of Nature, neither was it decreed "from the beginning" by the Christian's God, as old John Brown thought, who, like John Calvin believed in foreordination. It simply happened under the laws of fate or necessity. If a man believes in God as the controlling power in this universe he must logically believe in foreordination, for if this God is omniscient he knows just what will happen and how it will occur to the end of time.

So thought John Brown, who said just before he was hung: "I have no fault to find with the manner of my death. The disfigure of hanging does not trouble me in the least. Indeed, I know that the very errors by which my scheme was marred, were decreed before the world was made. I had no more to do with the course I have pursued than a shot leaving a cannon with the fate to fatalism, for there is nothing else to do.

Either a conscious intelligence runs the universe according to plans and purposes that are being worked out with mathematical certainty, or it is run by a blind and unconscious power that produces results in accord with necessity, as time rolls on with its everlasting changes.

Reason can conceive of nothing else, so I defy any man that walks the earth to overthrow the claims and arguments of fatalism, for to do so he must first produce his God and then counter his motion with natural laws or modes of action, and show how things do things. To explain the works of Nature by saying God acts through matter, is no explanation at all, and until some evidence of that mental creation is found apart from natural phenomena, God must take his place with the other myths that have interested and amused credulous man in by-gone ages. Fatalism deals only with facts, and God is not a fact, but a theory to explain the conclusions of those who dabble in superstition.

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BIBLE QUIZ.

The Philosophical Bible Class Book,
"Bible Myths and Their Parallels in
Other Religions," by Doane. The Class
Reader first reads the lesson for the
day; then the Quiz Master begins the
Memory Training of the class. The
reader silently follows the quiz in the
text. The Quiz Master, after receiv-
ing a satisfactory answer in sub-
stance, reads the answer in the quiz.
If the question has been put to three
members of the class without a satis-
factory reply, the reader without re-
quest, proceeds to read that portion
of the text covered by the question.
The question is then again put to the
class, etc.

Singing: Cosmian Hymn Book.
Lesson for April 17, 1910: "Paganism
and Christianity," Chapter XXXVI, p.
409, to close of the chapter.

A.—I find no other means to prove
doubt that Christianity is anything but
paganism under a new name?

Answer—No.
Q.—Baronius, an eminent Catholic
ecclesiastical historian, in speaking
of the adaptation of pagan ceremonies,
says what?

A.—It is permitted to the Church to
use, for the purpose of piety, the cer-
emonies which the pagans used for
the purpose of impiety in a supersti-
tious religion, after having first ex-
plained them by consecration to the
greater effort from employing, in
honor of Jesus Christ, that which his
enemy had destined for his own ser-
vice.

Q.—What is Clemens Alexandrinus'
opinion of Christianity and atheism?
A.—"Those who lived according to the
Logos were really Christians, though
they have been thought to have been
Atheists, as Socrates and Heraclitus
were among the Greeks, and such as
resemble them.

Q.—The testimony of St. Augustine
declaring the Christian religion to be
very ancient, is very interesting.
Please relate his narrative.

A.—That, in our times, is the Chris-
tian religion, which to know and fol-
low is the most sure and certain
health, called according to that name,
but not according to the thing itself,
of which it is the name; for the things

itself which is now called the Chris-
tian religion, really was known to the
ancients, nor was wanting at any
time from the beginning of the human
race until the time when Christ came
in the flesh, from whence the true re-
ligion, which had previously existed,
began to be called Christianity, and this
in our days the Christian religion, not
as have been wanting in former times,
but as having in later times received
this name.

Q.—The learned Christian advocate,
M. Tardieu, informs us what, concern-
ing Christianity and paganism?
A.—That it was not so much the
empire that was brought over to the
faith, as the faith that was brought
over to the empire; not the pagans
who were converted to Christianity,
but Christianity that was converted
to paganism.

Q.—Edward Gibbon tells us what
concerning the Constantine religion?
A.—That it achieved in less than a
century the final conquest of the Roman
Empire; but that the victors them-
selves were insensibly subdued by the
arts of their vanquished rivals.

Q.—What did Faustus, writing to St.
Augustine, say in regard to the rela-
tive of the Christian and pagan re-
ligions?
A.—"Nothing distinguishes you
from the pagans except that you hold
your assemblies apart from them."

Q.—The Greek philosopher, Ammo-
nius Saccus, founder of the Neoplatonic
school, taught what?
A.—That "Christianity and pagan-
ism, when rightly understood, differ in
no essential points, but had a com-
mon origin, and are really one
and the same thing."

Q.—What does Caelius say on this
subject?
A.—"All these fragments of crack-
brained opiatism and silly solas
played off in the sweetness of song
by (the) doctored (pagan) poets, by
you too credulous creatures (i. e. the
Christians) have been cheerfully re-
formed and made over to your own
God."

Q.—What did Celsus, the epicurean
philosopher, write on this subject?
A.—"The Christian religion contains
nothing but what Christians hold in
common with heathen, nothing new,
or truly great."

Q.—Justin Martyr, in his apology
to the Emperor Adrian for the Chris-
tian religion, set up what claim?
A.—That the Christians had not set
up a doctrine which in any essential
point, differed from that of the pa-
gans.

Q.—The most celebrated Fathers of
the Christian Church, whose names
stand the highest, are who?
A.—They were pagans, being born
and educated pagans: Panteus (A.
D.) was a half-pagan, half-Christian
Father; Clemens Alexandrinus (A.
D. 194) the same sort of a man; Ter-
tullian (200 A. D.) another one of the
hyo type.

Q.—How did Tertullian reason on
the evidences of Christianity?
A.—"In first no other means to prove
myself to be impudent with success,
and happily a fool, than by my con-
tempt of shame; as for instance, I
maintain that the Son of God was
born. Why am I not ashamed to
maintain such a thing? Why? but be-
cause it is itself a shameless thing
to maintain that the Son of God died.
Well, that is wholly incredible, be-
cause it is monstrously absurd. I main-
tain that after having been buried, he
rose again; and that I take to be ab-
surd, because it was manifestly impos-
sible."

Q.—Who was Origen (A. D. 230)
and St. Gregory (A. D. 240)?
A.—Both pagan-Christian Fathers.

Q.—What is the only difference be-
tween Christianity and paganism?
A.—That Brahms, Ormazd, Osiris,
Zeus, Jupiter, etc., are called by an-
other name; Christna, Buddha, Ba-
chus, Adonis, Mithras, etc., have been
returned into Christ Jesus; Venus pi-
gma into the Holy Ghost; Isis, Devaki, etc.
into the Virgin Mary; and the demi-
gods and heroes into saints. Pagan
festivals became Christian holidays,
and pagan temples became Christian
churches.

There is no "dead matter." If mat-
ter were dead there would be no
chemical affinity between atoms; no
life, gravity, attraction, etc., etc.

Q.—When a living structure or organism possesses
the identical life or potentialities it
did when in the living form or when it
first "gravitated" with millions of as-
sociate atoms to evolve such living
form. We may correctly define the
term "life" as organic or inorganic
life but never as living or dead mat-
ter.—Weiststein.

There is one essential agent the
chemist cannot control in his labora-
tory, viz: time; and this is the reason
why matter in Nature's workshop
produces results in the course of ages
which man in course of generations
can never accomplish.—Weiststein.

All fair historians agree that Co-
lumbus was the noblest figure of the
fifteenth century. While he may not
have been a model in some respects,
it is certain he possessed more hu-
manity than all the clergy since the
god theory was conceived.

DIVIDE UP

AMERICAN RELIGIONISTS WANT A SAINT OF THEIR OWN.

The Man Who Discovered America
Will Do as Well as Anybody
Else.

BY HAROLD BANNING.

The cunning brains of the religion-
ists have just conceived a new scheme
to promote business and attract atten-
tion. They have many ways of doing
so but having disgusted the world
with loud sermons and expensive pa-
rades they intend to accomplish their
purpose by selling the name of our
greatest benefactor—Christopher Co-
lumbus.

Columbus has been dead over four
hundred years but the ebb and flow
of time cannot save him from the re-
ligionists. All true Americans have
read with anger of this attempt to
canonize the great discoverer.

The plan was hatched in Philadel-
phia (that City of Brotherly Love,
whose streets are now stained with the
blood of the innocent), and like all
such intrigues soon bore fruit. A peti-
tion signed by only 2,900, asking for
the canonization of Columbus, was
presented to the Pope by one of the
religionists. The petition was soon
followed by a gang of Christians,
headed by a prominent American.
The reasons set forth by this dele-
gation should excite roars of laugh-
ter in our great Republic. Mr. Sar-
ti received them with his pious grin
and usual god-waddie. Then came
the request. The leader argued that
there was not a single American saint
in the calendar, and that it would be
a great consolation if the discoverer
of America were so honored.

He might have added that as sixty
per cent of the Americans worshiped
church as they do small-pox, they were
not greatly worried over the saint
question. But nothing was said of
this; no statistics were quoted, the
leader probably knowing that the
Holiness men's very "quick with
figgers."

He might have told 'em
Pope that as the Americans are the
most moral race in the world, they
did not want many saints around. He
should have described the warm wel-
come accorded to the latter Day
Saints. But none of these interesting
facts were mentioned, and they left
Mr. Sarti wondering why the poor,
pious Americans were denied any
home-grown saints.

The Rationals can hardly believe
the notion of a Republic can-
onizing a man on liberal principles could fall low
enough to envy the rotten monarchies
of Europe their great armies of crim-
inal saints. Oh, Religion, it is possi-
ble! Did this occur in 1910?

Not satisfied with this insult, some
pious priest came out with the state-
ment that Columbus was a vicious,
immoral sailor, "with a wife in every
port."

As our greatest historian, Irving, in
his "Life of Columbus," does not
mention this "fact," we may regard
it as a holy lie. This muckraking
servant of God has been reading the
works, or rather lies, of Father Boyle,
Irving tells how bitterly Boyle hated
Columbus because the admiral would
not allow him to torture and kill the
natives. When famine threatened the
colony, Columbus put Boyle on ration-
s. The priest could not afford to let
the admiral doing all in his power to
injure the great sailor.

Columbus endeavored to restrain
the cruel religionists and protect the
natives, but when he was absent they
did as they pleased. Great numbers
of priests and soldiers remained on
land killing and torturing the natives
in a most godly manner. On one
saint's day they hung thirteen natives
to honor Christ and the twelve dis-
ciples. After describing this horri-
ble crime, Irving says: "Such treat-
ment broke the admiral's heart, and
human cruelty may extend when stim-
ulated by zeal in the cause of religion."

The last years of the admiral's life
were clouded by the insults heaped
upon him by the clergy. Having
thrown every obstacle in the way of
his voyages, they now attempted to
humiliate the man who had shattered
the false geography of the Bible.

Among those priests was Juan Posca-
ca, patriarch of the Indies, who suc-
ceeded in having Columbus arrested
and sent home in chains. Such treat-
ment broke the admiral's heart, and
human cruelty may extend when stim-
ulated by zeal in the cause of religion."

Spoken prayer originated in an in-
cantation, remains of which are in
the frequent repetitions in the lit-
urgies of such have mercy upon us as
"Kyrie eleison," (Lord, have mercy upon
us), and "Good Lord, deliver us," by
which the deity is first flattered in being
called "good," and then asked to de-
liver from the evil ones or powers of
darkness. Flattery and self-abasement
were always accompanied with
prayer. Besides the collection of
good spells against the evil
ones, petitions for blessings, fine
weather, rain, success in battle, etc.,
were, and are to this day, common.

When Halley's comet appeared in
1456, it was considered the harbinger

The Christians cannot attack Co-
lumbus on the ground of immorality,
for their Bible is a poor adviser and
their own past is dark. When the
harlot was brought before Jesus, he
immediately pardoned her with the
famous sentence, "Neither do I condemn
thee." Let the Catholics read a
history of their Pope before at-
tacking Columbus. Let them read of
Pope Alexander III.

But the plan to canonize him is the
worst insult of all. Imagine the gal-
lant admiral seeking the society of the
pious prayer-mongers called saints.
Picture him associating with such
creatures. Columbus is too great to
be slandered by fanatics. All their
efforts to canonize, all their prayers,
petitions and noise are in vain, and
Columbus will be remembered and
praised when the word god has been
banished from the vocabulary of man.
Mt. Vernon, O.

H. PERCY WARD TO LECTURE.
Morrison House

Great Bend, Kansas, April 6, 1910

Editor Blue Grass Blade.—I ar-
rived in this country about two
months ago and have given a number
of lectures in this city under the
auspices of the Church of Humanity.

I am now arranging a lecture tour
through the principal cities of the
United States. My dates and places
are as follows:

May 22—Kansas City, Mo.
May 29—St. Louis.
June 5—Chicago.
June 12—Cleveland.
June 19—Pittsburg.
June 26—Washington.

July 3—Philadelphia.
July 10—New York.
July 17—New York.
July 24—Boston.
July 31—Montreal.

Aug. 7—Toronto.
Aug. 14—Buffalo.
Aug. 21—Detroit.

On the enclosed list are some of
the subjects of my lectures. In the
above cities, where there are Free-
thought Societies I shall be pleased
to lecture on my meetings and to
present their platform against idolatry
and superstition.

In those cities I visit in which
there are no such societies, I shall
be happy to hear from any friend
therein who are willing to assist in
the organization of my meetings and
to supply me with information re-
garding available halls.

Am I imposing too much upon
your good nature in asking if you will
be kind enough to draw your read-
ers' attention to the contents of this
letter and that of the enclosed hand-
bill? With cordial greetings and
sincere good wishes, I remain,
Sincerely yours,
H. PERCY WARD.

THE UTILITY AND LOGIC OF
PRAYER.

(By Joel M. Berry.)

The earliest prayer was a dance,
and in the early Christian church
special provision was made for dancing
in the "choir" (Greek, chorus—
dance). The "presules," or bishops,
led the dance on feast days.

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of the vengeance of the Deity, and
the Pope ordered all the church bells
in Europe to be rung in order to
attract attention. The faithful were or-
dered to add a special prayer to their
daily supplications. As their prayers
had so frequently before been answer-
ed in eclipses, and in times of drought
and rain, so on this occasion it was
declared that a victory over the ene-
my, when it disappeared, had been
vouchsafed to the Pope, who got the
credit for exercising successfully and
expelling it from the skies. Halley,
however, who discovered the comet,
guided by the revelation of Kepler
and Newton, also discovered that his
motions so far from being controlled
by prayer, were guided in an elliptic
orbit by destiny, and he predicted its
reappearance in 1459, which duly
occurred.

The Biblical promises accepted by
the Christian church as genuine re-
garding petitions, prayers, etc., collec-
tively and privately, are: 1st, "What-
soever ye shall ask in my name, that
I will do for you." (John 14:13.)
2nd, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the
Father in my name, He will give it to
you." 3rd, "Ask and ye shall receive,"
etc. (John 16:24-25.) 3rd, "The pray-
ers of a righteous man avail much."
4th, "If ye have faith as a grain of
mustard seed, ye shall say unto this
mountain: Remove hence to yonder
place, and it shall remove; and noth-
ing shall be impossible to you." (Matt.
17:20.) 5th, "All things are possible
unto them that believe." (Mark 9:23.)
6th, "Whoever shall say unto this
mountain, Be thou removed, and be
thou cast into the sea, and shall not
doubt, but shall believe that these
things which he saith shall come to
pass, he shall have whatsoever he
saith." 7th, "Whatsoever things ye de-
sire when ye pray, believe that ye
receive them, and ye shall have them."
(Mark 11:23-24.) 7th, "If ye
have faith as a grain of mustard seed,
ye shall say unto this sycamore tree,
Be thou plucked up by the root, and
be thou planted in the sea, and it
shall obey you." (Luke 17:6.)

The faith-carrying capacity of a
grain of mustard seed is impossible to
estimate, even roughly, but the ex-
pression suggests a very minute pro-
portion. The "naivete" of the latter
part of No. 6 exposes the magical
character and fraud of the attempt to
coerce the Jews into a blind credulity;
"believe that ye receive them and ye
shall have them."

The above promises are unlimited
as to persons and as to time, being by
no means limited to the life time of
the Apostles: "Believe that ye receive
them, and ye shall have them," etc.

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your good nature in asking if you will
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spoiled, and about forty million
pounds (sterling) of produce was lost
to the country.

Does the history of earthquakes and
other misfortunes, such as fires due
to natural phenomena, show that
praying people are saved from danger,
while the non-praying ones suffer?

When the earthquake of 1857 in the
north of Italy and south of France
occurred, were the churches (God's
own houses) saved, and the gaming
tables at Monte Carlo destroyed? No,
just the contrary. The inhabitants of
Balsardo fled from their houses in the
shock, where they were in the line
of the earthquake and the divine protec-
tion. The priests and people were
praying with one voice when the ce-
lestial answer arrived. A fresh wave
of earthquake rent the walls, and the
roof fell in on the faithful and believ-
ing crowd, killing three hundred and
mutilating as many more.

A violent gale swept over Xeres, on
Sunday, the "Lord's Day," May 22,
1859. The wind destroyed the buildings
and preserved the churches—the houses
of God? No. While the faithful
and devout "brides of Christ"—virgins
whose lives were dedicated to the ser-
vice of their God—were engaged in the
chapel of the Carmelite Convent, in
the most solemn act of worship
which the Catholic Church possesses,
not only was the chapel struck by
lightning at the moment when the
priest was administering the commun-
ion, but the priest who was in the
act of feeding these brides of heaven
with the body of their deity, was in-
jured.

When the building in which a Chris-
tian Bazaar for charitable purposes
was being held in Paris in 1857, was
burned down, were those pious and
benevolent people who were carrying
out the "work of their Master" inside
saved from the frightful effects of
the flames? No, numbers, and these
the most helpless, were burned to
death, among whom was a nun in
the very act of prayer, believing to
the last in the false promises of the
deity she placed her faith in.

But a French priest to be the
"act of God," but there were two acts
of God which required reconciling. The
first, the drawing together of his
people into an extricable trap with
his blessing; the second, the ruth-
less and cold-blooded murder, with-
out the pleadings of the good
nun—bride of Christ—even in her
agonies. Surely, if the love of this
fendish deity is to be obtained by
such cruelty and human suffering, we
may be accused for hoping that he
will not take it into his head to fall
upon the "brides of Christ."

But I must stop, or Bro. Weaver will
be calling me down for making my ar-
ticles too long. For further inform-
ation on this subject, see "Evolution
of Man," by Dr. Hurdwick, and "The
Folly of Prayer," by G. W. Foote.

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Blade Mail Bag

Terse and Pithy Comments from Various
Readers on Sundry Subjects

A Humanitarian.

CARROLL, WYO.—Editor Blue Grass Blade: If you will kindly allow me space in the columns of the Blade I would like to submit the following letter to my unorthodox friends for publication. The majority of whom do not profess Christianity, neither do they reject the divinity of Christ, but are content to sit supinely in the old rut of the ancient teachings of their forefathers. They are worldly people who have given little or no thought to the subject religion, except an occasional declaration that they "believe in a hereafter." It is in this class, that we owe our progress in the advancement of our cause. And it is to this class we can truthfully say, we know you are sensible and not prejudiced against reform of whatever nature, so long as it tends to the betterment of humanity.

We believe they will agree with us in this if they will but allow their better judgment to predominate long enough to investigate our cause, thoroughly from a scientific as well as Theological view point. A scientist knows things from personal observations. He looks at things in their natural state. His reasoning power is unbiased by superstition of any orthodox creed whatsoever. He will not allow his early training to intercept the progress of evolution. He is ever alert for new ideas and new methods. His highest ambition is to discover that which has been hidden by the dark ages of the past. When men have been freed from the awful fear of eternal punishment after death, by a vengeful God, then they will have climbed up and out of the ancient rut of religious superstition, and the world will have advanced a pace.

Men will be better fitted to look upon the universe in its natural state and be more capable of doing justice to his fellowman. The rising generations will be taught that this life is the only one they will ever know, that their only Heaven is here and now.

If we would be happy in this life, we must improve every opportunity to secure that end. Our happiness depends upon our social standing. If we overindulge our stomachs we suffer from stomach trouble. If we eat that which does not agree with us we are made to suffer accordingly. If we commit a crime we suffer the loss of our social standing. If we mistreat our neighbor we lose his respect. If we steal a valuable article then our guilty conscience rebukes us inwardly thus we become unhappy and life is made miserable by our own hand.

Now don't get the "God" idea mixed up with these characteristics. Please remember there is no "God" or no "Devil" existing in my mind to control my sentiments. I am a free moral agent of human nature. Free to think. Free to act. Free to speak, and by the careful manipulation of these principles I am able to control my entire life in the interest of my own personal happiness. This is Humanitarianism or Rationalism as you please.

Respectfully submitted,
MRS. C. B. HAVEN.
Carroll, Wyo.

Vera, South Dakota.

Editor B. G. Blade: It is so seldom we read an original statement, that I complimented the author of one, that, "The death of no woman was recorded in the bible." Without asking my permission the man rushed my letter to the printer with a long whally-whang lacking sense of etiquette.

Nearly every shade of opinion or belief may be found in the orthodox ranks, but in one matter they all agree; that the bible is history, and only God knows, "almost everything they do not."

My critic is too anxious to preserve the literal word, we suppose because it fits his copy, and so fearful that an allegorical interpretation will destroy it, that he avoids the truth.

He tells us that he "renounced orthodoxy over fifty years ago." Almost every thief will renounce burglary, though he continue to burglarize, by his man isn't orthodox, what is he? He doesn't claim to be liberal, and the matter under consideration is whether we use words in the sense their author used them, or attach a later and different meaning to them. The most important words of the bible are inserted, transiterated, and therefore retained, and are meant to be

understood in, their original Sanscrit, Assyrian or Hebrew meanings, as the case may be. English words also, being used in their radical sense, and free from traditional accretions, require more discretion than the ordinary blatherastic cares to devote to study.

If we attach a different meaning to the subject religion, except a word than its original sense, we have no means to determine what the people who coined and used such terms, thought; and my contention is for original meaning, when reading ancient writings.

Even many English words used in the bible have acquired different meanings through traditional usage since the bible was canonized; "prevent," as used in the text, then signified, a vent, or opening previously made, a way of escape arranged for, before the time of its need, where we now construe it as meaning, to intercept.

He asks what the word "Adam" would be. Well, taking the Bible for it, we find it defined thus: "Male and female created he them, and called their name Adam." Therefore the word Adam is presented as the name for the mind of man, and also the name of a woman's mind.

The bible tells us that "God is spirit," and that "Adam is created in the likeness and image of God," therefore we must conclude that Adam, like God, is spirit or mind, and has no special reference to his body, as the body of mankind is called "ground," i. e. "earthly body."

As God is only claimed to be an idea of the mind, and whereas many persons deny having any such idea, every liberal will grant them immunity without quibbling over it.

Credo, signifies a belief, or "I believe"; Misanthrope, is the term our pious ancestors applied to the heretics they toasted, and means, One who thinks wrong.

Create, signifies "to make out of nothing," or "to bring into existence." Create, signifies a belief, or "I believe"; Misanthrope, is the term our pious ancestors applied to the heretics they toasted, and means, One who thinks wrong.

In John 1-1, (N. T.) we find Jehovah, of the "beginning" introduced as ego, or Jesus (i. e. Reason, the great organizer of ideas), both words being the same, only one is Hebrew while the other is Greek, and neither is given as the name of a man, born in a natural way; therefore to be regarded as divine, or a matter of the mind.

Dictionaries tell us that the word "mind," signifies "to think," certainly a function of the mind, and not of the body.

I ask the name of his sixth day woman, or the woman "created" before Eve was produced; he fails to tell us her name, so we must concede that she is a creation of his own mental exuberance.

He tells that he "respects me as a man (I wish my wife said that) but not as a gentleman"; trust he may please himself as to his respects, my opinion of myself is of vastly more concern to me.

Feeling complimented that he credits me with writing something that is original and totally different, and that his "God only knows about"; am sorry that he greatly desires to practice self politeness. (See "Banish me from the Garden of Eden as quickly as you please, but first give me a bountiful feast from the tree of knowledge.") which the text refers to, I remain his friend and counselor.

F. S. WEAVER.

Thanks Much of the Blade.

CHAFER, MO.—Bro. Hughes: I send fifty cents for which I want you to send me as many extra copies of the last Blue Grass Blade dated March 20, as you can. It has some of the best articles I have seen. I want some copies to give my "orthodox" Christian friends. That article taken from the New York Sun by Golden Smith, "Evolution discussed by one of America's Leading Thinkers," I think is excellent. Then there is "Bible Revision" in which the writer tears the Bible all to pieces. I am glad the "higher critics" are busy themselves with "that sacred book," for after they have sifted and turned the searchlight of reason on that (miscellaneous collection of books) we will be able to separate

1909—1909

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BLUE GRASS BLADE, Lexington Ky.,

the dross and rubbish from the pure gold and discover pearls of priceless value. I think perhaps some of my friends would subscribe for the Blade, those who are not so "creed bound" as would want to read both sides of the question. I am sure it has been a great benefit to me to read the opposite side, for I have gained more knowledge and my faith has been more deeply grounded than ever by so doing. I hope you may have great success and that the Blade may increase in circulation and become a power in the world for the discovery of truth and knowledge. Yours in fraternal love and affection.

A. E. WADE.

A Promise from one of the Old School WILLIAMSBURG, O.—Dear Mr. Hughes: Your letter of the 14th inst. would have been given earlier acknowledgment except for my illness. I was glad indeed to hear from you, for it is rather pleasant to have evidence that in my long retirement I have not passed entirely from the memory of my fellowmen.

Regarding your request that I prepare a few articles for the Blade, will say that I shall be only too pleased to do so when possible. I deem it duty of all Free thought writers to place themselves at the service of those who have the active management of our propaganda press to whatever extent they consistently can. For the immediate present, however, I fear I can not respond to your call. For a long time, owing to persistent ill-health, I have been unable to do any writing for publication. My condition has forced me even to neglect important correspondence. You may be assured, however, that whenever again I am able to write, should you still feel could use to advantage any poor effort of mine, I shall find pleasure in giving you the best of which I am capable.

I have not seen the Blade for a long time, and am looking forward with much interest to the arrival of a copy.

Thanking you for your kindly remembrance and for the good opinion of my work implied in your request for contributions, and wishing you the widest success in your unflinching labors for the cause of intellectual freedom, I remain, faithfully and fraternally—WALTER HURST.

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